

Cats and Wildlife— *A conservation concern*

Cats are a serious threat to wildlife because:

- **Cats are not native to North America**, therefore, our native wildlife did not evolve good defenses against this numerous, efficient predator.
- **Cats are widespread!** There are over 73 million pet cats in the U.S., and an estimated 60 - 100 million stray and feral cats in the U.S.
- **Cats have huge advantages over native predators.** Being well-fed, they are not vulnerable to changes in prey populations. In addition, pet cats are more protected from diseases, predation, competition, and starvation--factors that control native predators.
- **Cats kill approximately 3 million birds a day in the United States.**



Domestic cat with a bird photo: C.Peaslee

How You Can Help Protect Birds and Other Wildlife:

- Keep cats as indoor pets, or in a safe enclosure such as a screened porch or outdoor cat run
- Eliminate outdoor sources of food such as garbage, compost piles, and outside pet food dishes that attract stray cats
- Spay or neuter your cats
- Vaccinate your cats
- Never abandon cats
- Never feed stray cats, don't contribute to cat feeding stations
- Don't put up a bird feeder if there are cats in your yard, or if stray cats frequent your yard
- Spread the word— inform your neighbors about the threats cats pose to birds and other wildlife by participating in the Cats Indoors Program of the American Bird Conservancy— www.abcbirds.org/cats/



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